



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE WATER AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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John R Clifford
Associate, Deputy Administrator, National Animal Health Policy Programs
United States Department of Agriculture
Marketing and Regulatory Programs
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services
Veterinary Services
Riverdale, MD
20237

Re: USDA-APHIS VISIT TO NAMIBIA

I refer to your letter which we received through the USDA-APHIS-IS office in Pretoria regarding the visit to Namibia of an APHIS review team in June 2003 to evaluate the FMD status.

We would like to thank you for your compliments on the veterinary services in Namibia. We would like to comment on the specific issues raised in your letter as follows:

1. Movement of small stock

We have taken note of your concerns of the potential risk associated with the movement of small stock to areas south of the veterinary cordon. The Directorate has decided to use sero-negative sentinel cattle in all the quarantine stations with effect from January 2003.

We are also considering a broader ser-survey to establish the status of all small-stock in the northern communal areas. An identification system for

small –stock is being developed details of which have been supplied in the accompanying document with additional data requested in your letter.

2. Movement of live-haul truck

The Directorate has noted the potential risk posed by cattle trucks and will implement a system to disinfect cattle trucks moving south of the veterinary cordon fence.

3. International garbage – (see main report)

4. Retirement of senior staff

The Ministry is very conscious of the loss of institutional memory as a result of the retirement of senior and will try to address the situation. The on-going restructuring of the Directorate is hoped to address the manpower requirements for effective FMD surveillance. In the meantime, field staff with special skill are being transferred to Head Office in Windhoek to acquaint themselves in the relevant fields.

5. Certification of brand marks

A decision has been made that Farm Visit forms will be amended to include documenting brands at the next reprint of the forms. In the meantime chief animal have been instructed to check that brands at all farms are checked by all animal health technicians under their control.

6. Training of customs officials

The Directorate will in future be involved with the training of Customs officials on the requirements for importation of animals and animal products. The first of such training will occur on 31 July 2003. On-going training will be provided by an official specifically appointed for that purpose.

There are long-term plans to improve the animal health status of areas north of the cordon fence after the eradication of CBPP, providing proof of freedom from FMD infection and construction of a fence along the border with Angola. It is not foreseen that there will physical removal of any of the current fences. The conditions for movements between the zones will depend on the epidemiological evidence available at the time.

I trust that this information will further enhance a favourable outcome for the risk assessment currently under way.

Sincerely,

A Norval (Dr)
Director of Veterinary Services